

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 EB-08 SNM-05 AGRE-00 CIAE-00
DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05
PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11 OMB-01 TRSE-00 COME-00
HA-05 SAA-01 PC-01 /090 W
-----033410 231013Z /16

R 230630Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY KABUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9190

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 KABUL 5930

DEPARTMENT PLEASE PASS AID

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: EAID, AF, US
SUBJECT: MEETING WITH MINISTER OF PLANNING SULTAN ALI KISHTMAND

REFS: A. KABUL 4614 B. STATE 182002

1. SUMMARY. ACCOMPANIED BY THE AID DIRECTOR, I CALLED ON MINISTER OF PLANNING SULTAN ALI KISHTMAND ON JULY 19. WE INDICATED OUR WILLINGNESS TO SIGN AGREEMENTS ON THE HELMAND VALLEY AND INTEGRATED WHEAT DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS, AND DISCUSSED THE ANTI-OPIUM CULTIVATION AGREEMENT FOR THE AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT BANK CREDIT, THE PROPOSED AFGHAN FIVE-YEAR PLAN, AND AID PARTICIPATION IN IBRD PROJECTS. END SUMMARY.

2. ACCOMPANIED BY THE AID DIRECTOR, I MADE MY INITIAL CALL ON MINISTER OF PLANNING SULTAN ALI KISHTMAND ON JULY 19. THE FOCUS OF OUR MEETING WAS U.S. ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS IN AFGHANISTAN.

3. I AFFIRMED TO THE MINISTER THAT, AS UNDER SECRETARY NEWSOM HAD TOLD PRESIDENT TARAKI AND FOREIGN MINISTER AMIN, THE U.S. WAS PREPARED TO SIGN THE CENTRAL HELMAND VALLEY DRAINAGE AGREEMENT FOR \$3,151,000. I EXPRESSED OUR WILLINGNESS
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TO CONCLUDE THE AGREEMENT AS SOON AS IT WAS CONVENIENT FOR THE GOVERNMENT.

4. I ALSO INFORMED THE MINISTER THAT AUTHORIZATION FROM WASHINGTON TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL FUNDS FOR THE INTEGRATED WHEAT DEVELOPMENT PROJECT HAD BEEN RECEIVED (REFTEL B). I EXPLAINED THAT THESE ADDITIONAL FUNDS WOULD BE NECESSARY TO PROCEED

WITH PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION AS SOON AS THE AFGHAN GOVERNMENT COMPLETED CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE MIDDLE AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL AGRICULTURE CONSORTIUM (MIAC). THE MINISTER SAID THIS PROJECT HAD BEEN REVIEWED BY THE CABINET AND A DECISION HAD BEEN TAKEN TO GO AHEAD WITH IT. HE SAID THAT SOME CONCERN HAD BEEN EXPRESSED IN THE CABINET REGARDING THE LOCATION OF THE PROJECT IN BAGHLAN, AND THAT PERHAPS THIS WAS NOT THE BEST SITE FOR THE PROJECT. THE MINISTER SUGGESTED THAT ALTERNATIVE REGIONS BE CONSIDERED AND MENTIONED THE HELMAND VALLEY AS A POSSIBLE SITE. HE INDICATED THAT THIS WAS NOT A CONDITION FOR PROCEEDING WITH THE PROJECT, BUT SOMETHING THEY WOULD LIKE TO EXPLORE WITH US. I SAID THAT WE WOULD HAVE OUR TECHNICAL PEOPLE DISCUSS THE REASONS FOR THE SELECTION OF BAGHLAN AS THE PROJECT SITE WITH THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE.

5. I EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR THE COOPERATION WE ARE RECEIVING FROM THE DRA AND THE GENERALLY SATISFACTORY PROGRESS WHICH IS BEING MADE WITH AID PROJECTS. I NOTED THAT ONE EXCEPTION TO THIS IS THE FIVE MILLION DOLLARS CREDIT TO THE AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT BANK WHICH HAS APPARENTLY REACHED A BUREAUCRATIC IMPASSE BECAUSE OF THE LANGUAGE IN THE POPPY SIDE LETTER. FAILURE TO RESOLVE THIS PROBLEM IS PREVENTING THE RELEASE OF FUNDS FOR THE PROJECT. THE MINISTER MADE A NOTE AND PROMISED TO CONTACT THE AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT BANK AND THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS TO RESOLVE THE MATTER. FYI. TEN MINUTES AFTER WE LEFT THE MINISTER'S OFFICE, THE EMBASSY RECEIVED A PHONE
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CALL FROM MAROOFI, MFA, SAYING THAT THE PROBLEM HAD BEEN RESOLVED AND THAT WE WOULD BE RECEIVING A LETTER TO THIS EFFECT. END FYI.

6. THE AID DIRECTOR MENTIONED THAT THE IBRD HAD JUST APPROACHED AID TO ASK IF IT WOULD BE INTERESTED IN PARTICIPATING IN THE BANK'S INTEGRATED RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT IN WARDAK AND GHAZNI PROVINCES. THE TOTAL COST OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT HAD INCREASED TO AN ESTIMATED \$28 MILLION OF WHICH THE IBRD WILL FINANCE \$15 MILLION, AND WILL REQUIRE AN ADDITIONAL FIVE OR SIX MILLION DOLLARS FROM FOREIGN SOURCES. THE AID DIRECTOR ASKED THE MINISTER HIS VIEWS ON THIS MATTER. THE MINISTER SAID HE WAS NOT FAMILIAR WITH THE ISSUE, BUT WOULD CHECK AND GET BACK TO US. SUBSEQUENTLY, MR. SULEIMANZAI, PRESIDENT OF THE RURAL DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT, CONFIRMED HIS DEPARTMENT'S DESIRE THAT AID PARTICIPATE.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 KABUL 5930

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7. I INQUIRED ABOUT THE PROGRESS OF THE NEW FIVE-YEAR PLAN.
THE MINISTER SAID THEY WERE JUST AT THE CONCEPTUAL STAGE AND
THAT IT WOULD NOT BE READY FOR SOME TIME. HE STATED THE PRINCIPAL
EMPHASIS OF THE PLAN WILL BE EITHER ON INDUSTRY OR AGRICULTURE.
THE MINISTER ASKED THE U.S. TO COOPERATE IN THE PREPARATION
OF THE PLAN BY INDICATING PROJECTS WE WOULD BE WILLING TO
FINANCE AND THE LEVEL OF U.S. ASSISTANCE THAT COULD BE EXPECTED.
THE AID DIRECTOR EXPLAINED OUR BUDGETING AND PROJECT APPROVAL
PROCESS. WE EXPRESSED OUR WILLINGNESS TO COOPERATE WITH THE
MINISTRY TO THE EXTENT POSSIBLE IN IDENTIFYING SECTORS AND
ACTIVITIES WHICH MIGHT BE APPROPRIATE FOR U.S. ASSISTANCE.

8. COMMENT: THE MEETING WAS PLEASANT AND FRIENDLY. THE
MINISTER SEEMED MORE FAMILIAR WITH U.S. ASSISTANCE PROJECTS AND
KNOWLEDGEABLE ABOUT U.S. PROCEDURES THAN ON THE EARLIER CALL
(REFTEL A) AMBASSADOR ELIOT AND THE AID DIRECTOR MADE ON HIM.
THE PRINCIPAL PROBLEM WHICH CROPPED UP DURING THE MEETING WAS
THE POSSIBLE AFGHAN DESIRE TO CHANGE THE LOCATION OF THE INTE-
GRADED WHEAT DEVELOPMENT PROJECT FROM BAGHLAN TO ANOTHER SITE.
THE CONCERN OF THE MINISTER MAY REFLECT DRA APPREHENSION ABOUT
HAVING AN AMERICAN PROJECT LOCATED NORTH OF THE HINDU KUSH
MOUNTAINS.

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9. SUBSEQUENT TO THE MEETING, WE HEARD FROM THE INDIAN
EMBASSY THAT THE PLANNING MINISTER IS TO GO TO NEW DELHI AS
AMBASSADOR. THIS REPORT IS AS YET UNCONFIRMED.
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